THE THIRD DAY.

WEDNESDAY, THE 11TH MARCH. 1925.

The Assembly met again in the Victoria Jubilee Town Hall at 11-35 A. M., the Dewan presiding.

15. Disafforestation and Registry of Lands.

MR. C. A. A. MEERA ROWTHER (*Member, Peermade Taluk*) urged the need for the disafforestation of the cultivable lands included within the Urumbikkara reserve in the Peruvantanam second bit in the Peermade taluk, and their registry in the names of cultivators. The first bit belonged to the Vanjipuzha Chief and the entire area, except the rocky portion, was under rubber, paddy or other cultivation. In the second bit, which was more than three square miles in extent and belonged to the Sirkar, the registered holdings comprised only 65 acres and 98 cents while the rest was reserved forest. The holdings were of comparatively small size and lay scattered, with the result that the maximum benefits could not be secured by the cultivators. In the resurvey which followed the forest settlement, lands under *bona fide* occupation and with considerable improvements were added to the reserve, as would be clear from the cocoanut, jack, mango and arecanut trees within the reserve. The annual revenue from the registered area was Rs. 55-10ch.-15cash, while, owing to the absence of royal trees and on account of inaccessibilty, the revenue derived by the Forest Department from the reserved area of 1,990 acres and 49 cents was negligible. The disafforestation and assignment of this vast area, which was eminently suited for cultivation, would bring in a non-recurring revenue of nearly Rs. 20,000 under *tarvila* and of nearly Rs. 70,000 under *tadivila*, besides securing a recurring annual tax of more than Rs.1.900. The area should be assigned not in big blocks for rubber cultivation, but in parcels for cultivation by poor agriculturists. The member suggested that the matter might, if necessary, be examined by a mixed committee of officials and non-officials, and presented copies of the petitions from the local people praying for the disafforestation of the Urumbikkara reserve.

DEWAN: The Peruvantanam *pakuthi* is about 2,000 acres in extent. As you say, only about 60 acres have been registered so far. The remaining area of over 1,900 acres forms the reserved forest in the locality. You suggest that, if the forest is cleared, the wild animals driven away or killed, the lands sold and registered and the timber also sold to the public, Government would get a profit of about Rs. 90,000. All that may be true. But the conservation of forests is as important a matter as the cultivation of lands, and certainly more important than some immediate increase of revenue. Moreover, this is the only reserve in that locality. The other lands in the locality belong to the Vanjipuzha Edavakai. The matter cannot, therefore, be decided off-hand. The Conservator will be consulted in the matter, and Government can decide the question only after proper investigation.

16. Income Tax.

MR. TRIVIKRAMAR VASUDEVAR (*Member, Jenmies, Trivandrum Division*) prayed that the income from *tanatu* lands of *jenmies* should not be assessed to income tax. The present law worked the greatest hardship on *jenmies* and Edavakai Chiefs. They were inadequately represented in the Legislative Council and could not effectively put forth their case or get their grievance redressed. This became patent at the meeting of the Council when the principle of the Income Tax Regulation Amendment Bill was discussed. *Karamozhivu* lands were held only by the *jenmies* and Edavakais who were historically connected with the Ruling family and received those lands for services rendered to the country in the past. The grievance about the taxation of income derived from such lands affected only a minority community and therefore the Government should move in the matter.

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